HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

PROC • NUMBER 117 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, September 20, 2018

Chair

The Honourable Larry Bagnell

Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Thursday, September 20, 2018

● (1105)

[*English*]

The Chair (Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.)): Good morning, and welcome to the 117th meeting of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. This is primarily a committee business meeting, but we have a couple of elections to do first.

I'll turn it over to the clerk to run our election for a vice-chair.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Angela Crandall): Pursuant to Standing Order 106, the first vice-chair is a member of the official opposition.

I'm now ready to receive motions for the position of first vice-chair.

Mr. Reid, go ahead.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): After giving this long thought, and considering the available candidates, and also the instructions from our whip—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Scott Reid: —I have come to the conclusion that the stars have aligned for the most competent and best candidate, and also the one the whip would like to see, and therefore I nominate Stephanie Kusie.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Does it have to be seconded before I make a speech?

The Clerk: Are there any further nominations?

The Chair: There's time for a half-hour speech.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I'm very happy to be here. I'm very honoured to have the role of shadow cabinet member for democratic institutions.

I'm sure many of you know.... Actually, I would not expect that.

[*Translation*]

I say this because I served on the Standing Committee on Official Languages with Ms. Lapointe. We have a history together. After that, I served with Mrs. Jordan.

[*English*]

That was through Status of Women, so it's very nice to see some familiar faces in the room.

Previous to my life as a parliamentarian, I was a diplomat for 15 years. I was very fortunate to have postings both in established and in developing democracies. I've seen the government hold democracy to account, as well as the potential negative pathways that this can take in the world, which we have definitely seen in the region of the Americas, where I primarily did my diplomatic career, but also other places abroad. It's really an honour to receive this position.

It's exciting for me as well because the minister and I have a lot in common. We're both young mothers, like Ruby. Each of the three of us has one son. That's something very exciting for us, but also our love for the Americas, of course, given the minister's charitable work abroad, where she met her husband, I understand. We both *hablar español* as well, so maybe we'll have some *preguntas en español* on the next occasion when she visits us. That probably won't happen, considering we keep things in both official languages here.

It's definitely an honour to be here. For the record, and regarding past vice-chair appointments, I will say that I am pro-democracy. I hope no one has a problem with that.

That's a joke.

Mr. Scott Reid: I did not know this. I don't know why this wasn't shared with me before I made the nomination.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: That's a terrible habit I have, turning tragedy into comedy.

Anyway, it's a pleasure to be here. Thank you very much, Scott and the committee, for your confidence in me. I look forward to this being a lot of fun. Procedure and processes, of course, are the basis of good society: peace, order and good government as we know it. As such, I'm very happy to be here.

I happily accept the nomination, and I ask for your support.

Thank you.

The Clerk: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried, and Mrs. Kusie duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Thank you very much.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): It was eerily similar to a Venezuelan election.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Yes, that's right. Exactly.

My first act is not really democratic.

Mr. Scott Reid: To be fully parallel, I would have to beat up John as the alternative candidate.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: While I look away....

Mr. Scott Simms: John, my sincere apologies.

The Chair: We also have to appoint a new chair of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business.

David, go ahead.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): I nominate Madame Lapointe.

I don't want the job.

Mr. Scott Simms: That's quite an endorsement.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: There are no other possibilities.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Okay, we'll move on to committee business.

Chris, go ahead.

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): I know we ran into some stumbling blocks back in June, but moving forward—and I appreciate everyone's desire to move this forward—one item that I would like to discuss is amendments on the bill.

I don't believe we received the package. My understanding is that the opposition has put in their amendments on the bill. That being said, we do have some further amendments on the bill that we would like to put in. Many of them are technical amendments from Elections Canada. Others are amendments that address some of the concerns that have been raised by the opposition. Even though there was a deadline in the past, it might just be easier if we all had a package, rather than the government bringing amendments from the floor.

We would request a new deadline, and that amendments be submitted by Monday, September 24, at noon. That would permit the clerk to get out the package of amendments as soon as possible.

The Chair: Is there any objection to that?

Mr. Scott Reid: We just need a second to chat among ourselves.

The Chair: Okay.

● (1105)

(Pause)

● (1115)

The Chair: Let's have some discussion on the amendment.

Mr. Nater, go ahead.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

First of all, it's great to see Mr. Christopherson. On behalf of our corner of the caucus, thank you for your years of service. I think it's unfortunate that you're going to be leaving in an election, but I want to publicly say how much we like having you. We look forward to next year, when we will still have your guidance and expertise.

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Thank you. That's very nice of you.

Mr. John Nater: Thank you, Mr. Bittle, for bringing forward that suggestion.

For the most part we are okay with that. I think we can get the amendments we have. I don't expect we'll have many more than have already been submitted. I would be more comfortable if we kept that as a somewhat soft deadline because I think it's still worthwhile for us to hear from the Ontario chief electoral officer. They had their election in June. They were not able to come in June, obviously, because of the election, so they declined at that point. If we could hear from the CEO of Ontario next week, as well as perhaps the federal Chief Electoral Officer and the minister, we could go from there. There may be amendments that may come out of those witnesses, but I think that would be a solid starting point for us to move forward with this if that would be acceptable.

The Chair: Mrs. Kusie, go ahead.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I'd like to recognize that I did express to the minister in our meeting on Tuesday our interest in hearing from the Ontario electoral officer. She is aware I have concerns with regard to the application of the provincial legislation to the federal legislation.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Nater, are you suggesting that we have all the amendments except for the ones that could result from those witnesses?

Mr. John Nater: Yes. I don't know what they would say or what has developed over the summer. We'll take anything we have now and put it in, and anything that comes afterwards we will have in due course.

The Chair: David, go ahead.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I don't have a huge problem with that, as long as we can.... If we start clause-by-clause on October 2, I'd be okay with having those witnesses before then.

I don't have a problem with the witnesses, but I'd like to get clause-by-clause started on September 27, if we can.

Mr. David Christopherson: David, you just gave two different dates.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I think Thursday afternoon is the easier one.

I can move the motion.

Mr. Scott Reid: Do you guys mind if we wait for a second?

Mr. David Christopherson: Angela, are you running the whole government? Everywhere I go, you're there.

Mr. Chris Bittle: I'd like to verify the reason for the Thursday date, because there already was an agreement that the minister come back and testify before clause-by-clause. The minister is available to testify Thursday, September 27, at 3:30. That would be the start of clause-by-clause.

Mr. John Nater: Are we really starting clause-by-clause at 4:30 on a Thursday afternoon?

Mr. Chris Bittle: That would be the—

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: The official start would be the minister coming.

Mr. Scott Reid: If there's some way of structuring that so it's not leading us down the position of starting at 4:30 on Thursday, if that is within the realm of possibility, that would certainly warm the cockles of my heart a little bit as I plan that particular weekend.

● (1120)

Mr. David Christopherson: We want to keep them warm.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I think we need another moment to discuss this.

The Chair: We'll just suspend for a couple of minutes.

● (1120)

(Pause)

● (1200)

The Chair: Welcome back, folks.

David, I understand you're going to clarify the motion that you're proposing.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Yes, I'd like to offer a compromise motion to at least get things started here.

Are you ready to listen to my motion? I'll try to read it at other people's speed for you.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Human speed....

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I move that the committee invite the chief elections officer and the chief elections officer of Ontario to appear for one hour each on Tuesday, September 25, 2018; and invite Minister Gould to appear from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 27, 2018, on Bill C-76, and start clause-by-clause on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 11 a.m.

The Chair: Is there any discussion?

Mr. Scott Reid: Yes, I appreciate the generous sentiment that this would be at other people's speed.

I have, "That the committee invite the CEO and the Ontario CEO...." Could we try getting that repeated?

The Chair: Say it again, David.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Faster or slower?

Mr. Scott Reid: Yes, slower....

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: That the committee invite the chief elections officer and the chief elections officer of Ontario—

I'm watching for your cue, Scott, to see if you're keeping up.

Mr. Scott Reid: Was that on Thursday?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: —to appear for one hour each on Tuesday, September 25, 2018; and invite Minister Gould to appear....

Mr. Scott Reid: I'm actually trying to skip the connecting words. Is Minister Gould on Thursday or Tuesday?

Ms. Ruby Sahota: It was Thursday.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: It's from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 27, 2018, on Bill C-76.

Mr. Scott Reid: That's the 27th. Okay.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Yes.

And then we start clause-by-clause on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 11 a.m.

Mr. Scott Reid: It starts the next Tuesday, essentially, October 2.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Yes.

Mr. Scott Reid: I do have that. I didn't have all the connecting words, but I have the—

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I can give you some more connecting words, if you'd like.

Mr. Scott Reid: No, it's okay.

The Chair: Mr. Nater, go ahead.

Mr. John Nater: Thank you, Chair.

I appreciate the Liberals, this government, putting out their motion and where they want to see this going.

I would amend the motion by deleting all the words after the words "on Bill C-76".

I think that a reasonable approach at this point would be to go forward with hearing from the witnesses next week in good faith. I think it's truly acknowledged here that there are discussions and negotiations happening on amendments at levels that aren't currently in this room, so I think providing this change—accepting the witnesses—would be a reasonable compromise and a reasonable ability to move forward on this.

Let's look back a bit at where we've been. The bill itself came forward on April 30, I believe, which was the last day that the Chief Electoral Officer said he could implement something. I haven't seen where the government is willing to amend. I haven't seen where they're willing to accept amendments from the opposition—or the third party for that matter, the NDP.

Before we agree to move into a clause-by-clause situation, I think we need to have some reassurance from the government that what we're looking at and what we really want to see is there. That's the amendment I would move to the motion. Yes, as an opposition we are willing to move forward. We're willing to hear the witnesses and we're willing to have that discussion about going into clause-by-clause once we've heard from the minister on Thursday. At this point, this would be the approach I would take.

● (1205)

The Chair: On the amendment, we have Mr. Reid, Mr. Bittle, Mrs. Kusie, and then Ms. Sahota and Mr. Christopherson.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I can always read it again.

Mr. Scott Reid: I could have taken more time to read the connecting words. Where do the words "in Bill C-76" occur? Is it at the very beginning?

Mr. John Nater: It's after the appearance of the minister.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Do you want me to send it to you?

Mr. John Nater: Do we have a written copy?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I just have it on my iPad.

The Chair: Come on, you guys, let's get on with it.

Mr. Scott Reid: Essentially, John, what you're trying to do is remove the words dealing with clause-by-clause starting on October 2 at 11 a.m., and you're proposing instead....

Mr. John Nater: I would just delete that part.

Mr. Scott Reid: Okay, right. But the logic is that this allows us to be in a position where we actually have some ability to get the amendments that we'd like to see considered properly. Once you get the programming motion, the practical result is that a government with a majority need not take into account the concerns of opposition parties. And this is our worry with this motion.

You may recall that a version of this writ large was our concern with the adoption of programming motions in general when that issue arose in March 2017. At the time, we felt that the only leverage the opposition ever has in a majority government would be gone. You can expect that this will be the general response we're always going to have to programming motions of this nature, that they take away the ability to say we have concerns. Let's take that into account.

I know the idea is that majority governments have the will of Parliament, the majority of members, behind them. But sometimes it's an elected dictatorship. That's not what Canada is. It's what an unhappy caricature of Canadian politics would be if someone gets a majority and that's the end. You essentially have a four-year Stalin. That's actually not what the Canadian system is. The opposition has a chance to slow things down in order to get its perspective heard and implemented. This forces the government to make some compromises in which they'll take into account the proposals and amendments that the opposition might have. If we do this, that's gone.

Mr. David Christopherson: You were here in the last Parliament, weren't you?

● (1210)

Mr. Scott Reid: No, no. To respond—

Mr. David Christopherson: I'm sorry to interject. I can only take so much of this.

Mr. Scott Reid: To respond to David's point, it's actually a valid point. This is a feature we see in majority governments regardless of their partisan stripe. It is a temptation all majority governments fall into. As much as I would like to be able to say this, I would not argue that the Harper government was the one exception to the long history of majority government behaviour in Canadian history. I think that, on that point, we're actually—

Mr. David Christopherson: I think they set some records that they have to carry around.

Mr. Scott Reid: But these problems could have been and would have been that much worse if the opposition had not had the ability to engage in the kinds of activities that oppositions normally engage in with majority governments, if those had been stripped away. You can see that there were tools there, which remain in place today, that are of use to oppositions. On that point, I think we're probably on the same page.

Mr. David Christopherson: Sorry, I shouldn't have interrupted. I want to apologize.

Mr. Scott Reid: It's okay.

That is the point here. Once we accept the programming motion, which is what this is, everything else doesn't matter. All we want on this side is a chance to find some way of adopting a motion that allows us to move forward with some assurance that the specific concerns that our party has articulated are going to be incorporated.

Right now, we don't know what amendments are being considered by the government. We don't know if they take into account our concerns. We don't know if opposition amendments would be considered. They normally are not considered in a majority government. That's a statement of fact. But in a minority Parliament, what typically happens is that you need the support of at least one opposition party. David and I were both present through several minority Parliaments.

What happens is that you actually have to stop and show your cards to each other to form a coalition for the purpose of this particular bill. You have to say, look, here are the amendments we want. The other side says, we're willing to give you some of that and not other things, and you have a discussion about that. It happens in a way that produces a piece of legislation that perhaps is not the government's absolute ideal. It's certainly not the opposition's ideal, but it actually is something closer to that centre that is presumably the thing we search for in a Parliament.

After all, the name "Parliament" comes from the French *parlement*, which indicates *à parler*, to speak to each other, to seek compromise. This is what we hope to achieve on this bill, particularly since I don't believe.... I was the critic or shadow minister, as we call it, to this minister for the first part of her career, and in between my tenure and that of Stephanie, it was Blake Richards. None of us, the three of us, thought that she is an inherently unreasonable or inflexible person. I thought, on the contrary, that she is practical and willing to look for solutions that would incorporate the concerns of all parties.

I would add that this is not something unique to the minister. Seeking a compromise that involves suggestions from all sides is something that is also felt and supported by our Chief Electoral Officer, Stéphane Perrault, who indicated that....

My point, as well as I can express it, and I believe Mr. Genuis can express it even more fully, is that—

Mr. David Christopherson: Why do the Conservatives hate democracy?

Mr. Scott Reid: Conservatives love democracy.

Mr. David Christopherson: It's an abusive relationship.

Mr. Scott Reid: A party that has been in opposition for more than half of its history is very concerned about the aspect of democracy that relates to procedural fairness for opposition parties. That's just a feature and reality of this.

Look, in our system we all want to be in opposition some of the time. We need to take great care to make sure that in the moments when we are in government, especially a majority government, we do not forget that we may find ourselves back on the Speaker's left-hand side and in opposition, which is a concern that I think Mr. Christopherson is expressing: that the government of which I was a member may have forgotten this, may not have given it adequate regard. He may very well have a point. It's certainly the case that we want to make sure this government does not forget it.

● (1215)

The Chair: Are you, then, supporting the amendment?

Mr. Scott Reid: As you can tell from the nature of the remarks I'm making, I'm generally supportive of the tenor and direction of the amendment.

I want to urge all members of this committee to consider being supportive of this amendment, just as I want them to be supportive of the actual amendments to the bill that my party is proposing. We need to have some kind of assurance that those will be taken into account.

I'm aware that amendments proposed by opposition parties are not normally accepted by governments in committee. It requires some kind of behind-the-scenes negotiation between the minister or those who work for her and our shadow minister, and likewise with the House leaderships. These things always have a number of different players.

We have to allow this to happen. A programming motion shuts it down. That's the thing we're trying to avoid.

The Chair: Mr. Reid, we have a long list here. Do you have any new point to add here?

Mr. Scott Reid: I'm in the process of making points, but I think it's not unreasonable to think that I should not move from any of the specific points that I've enumerated in my discussion until I'm certain they have been fully grasped by those who are not necessarily persuaded, but who certainly are potentially the targets of persuasion.

That essentially is the point concerning the motion. It is that we simply remove the part that says that clause-by-clause starts on October 2.

It is entirely conceivable—and this is something that I have not said at this point, Mr. Chair—that once we've had the opportunity to negotiate and be more certain of this position, be more certain that what we are being offered represents a genuine opportunity to present our amendments, we will be happy to return to a date that allows the expeditious adoption of the bill.

The bill, as you can imagine, seems more desirable to us if it has some amendments that reflect our concerns. Our willingness to move forward with it, not merely to start the process of dealing with clause-by-clause but to finish it, would therefore be greatly sped up if we had that kind of assurance.

The way this place works, and we all know this—those who have been around for a while certainly know it, and those of us who are new to the place are rapidly finding out—is that the rules allow things to grind along extraordinarily slowly when we're not talking to each other behind the scenes. As a result, when we think there's potential for a compromise, we have the practice of dealing behind the scenes to work out what that compromise might be.

That is, for example, why we have House leaders' meetings every Monday afternoon.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: There does have to be a willingness to compromise.

Mr. Scott Reid: Yes, there does have to be a willingness to compromise. That's part of the point, David, of saying that I don't sense an unreasonableness on the part of the minister, quite the contrary.

I have to be careful of what I say about her. I've said some really nice things about her. She could practically write an entire campaign brochure saying, "Here's what the Conservatives think about me. Vote for me." I may live to regret that. I don't mind her winning a second term; I just don't want her coming back and congratulating me and saying, "I couldn't have done it without you, Scott." That would be very upsetting.

The way compromises work is that they are worked out behind the scenes. Each side has to express what its own bottom line is. Then they have to go back, and there's a chain of command that is not that fast, but it works. It speeds things up. Every side has to be respectful of the privacy of such negotiations, of course, because as we all know, politics is a bit like making sausages. Nobody wants to see sausages being made.

These are just reasonable positions, so we hope that we can get that. My sense today is that the new parliamentary secretary came with what amounted to an opening bid in those negotiations. We're simply responding to that opening bid. It would not be reasonable for anyone who has been around here for a while to expect that one accepts that opening bid at face value or as the fallback position. We no more assume that of her than she does of us, or the reverse. We are simply trying to work toward a situation in which the folks who are not present in this room right now, but who ultimately make the decisions, have a chance to talk to each other either directly or through us, or whatever happens to work, in order that we can actually have a discussion that winds up moving toward the adoption of this bill, amended in some form.

I can say definitively that nobody thinks the bill in its present form is ideal. The government doesn't think so; it has some suggested amendments of its own. I should be careful of what I say here, because I don't actually know this for a fact. I certainly know what the sources are and their concerns. I know for a fact that the CEO expressed some concerns and had some suggestions. I'm sure that's the source of some of those concerns. I would expect that, as is typical, they would have some concerns based on the fact that the draftspeople don't always get everything exactly right. You have to make technical corrections for that. Those are two sources.

It may also be the case that they've made some calculations that some of what they were proposing—it is, after all, a very large bill, on many subjects—in one or another of those subject areas may well be other than the ideal proposal, from a policy point of view. For whatever reason, those calculations would be based upon....

They have a series of changes they themselves want to make. It goes without saying that the opposition has its own reservations. We want to make sure that either their amendments take into account the kinds of things that we have in our amendments, or that they will take some of our amendments. They can propose them as government amendments—we don't care—but they should actually make sure that these things are given a real chance.

That's not something that will be negotiated in the process of going through clause-by-clause. That's not what happens once you're in that process. Once you're in that process, each amendment is voted up or down on a party-line vote. That is just what happens.

● (1220)

I'm sure if I go back I'll find an exception to that somewhere, but I can't think of an exception to that in my own parliamentary experience, which is pretty long at this point. Giving our people the chance to work this out between each other is what I'm trying to do right now. It's why I'm taking such pains to be as thorough as possible in the remarks that I deliver to you today.

The minister and shadow minister have just come back into the room, so it is conceivable that they will want to share further information with us.

Would it be unreasonable, Mr. Chair, to ask if the committee would be willing to give a brief suspension while we do that?

The Chair: Make it very brief, though. We can't take too long.

We'll suspend for a couple of minutes.

● (1220)

(Pause)

● (1240)

The Chair: We're un-suspended, I hope for the last time.

I understand we have some sort of agreement here. Does someone want to say what it is?

Mr. Scott Reid: I have a substantial number of additional comments to make, some of which I know you'll find absolutely riveting.

I suppose I would, with great reluctance, be willing to surrender the floor to the parliamentary secretary, Ms. Jordan, but I don't want to rush her, so I'll just give it a second and continue to say that, while we're waiting....

Sorry, it's going to be Mr. Graham, I guess.

I'm just going to talk until I get a signal that this is all sorted out.

The Chair: Are you ready?

Mr. Graham, go ahead.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Please hold. Your call is important to us.

Mr. David Christopherson: This would be a lot harder to take if I thought it was coming back with more to study.

● (1245)

Mr. John Nater: You can always change your mind.

Mr. David Christopherson: No, no. I already got my guy lined up. He'd assassinate me.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I will have a revised version of my motion available in just a second.

The Chair: Okay.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Get the typing fingers ready.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I am withdrawing my previous motion and reissuing it with some changes. It's easier than doing amendments, so keep your original text. It's not that far off.

I'll read it once, and then I can read it again more slowly for you, Scott, if you'd like. I move that the committee invite the chief elections officer and the chief elections officer of Ontario to appear for a total of 90 minutes on Tuesday, September 25, 2018, and decide on the date to commence clause-by-clause at that meeting; and invite Minister Gould to appear from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 27, 2018 on Bill C-76.

I'm ready to read it again more slowly as you type.

Mr. Scott Reid: I got most of it. Basically, what it boils down to is 90 minutes for the two CEOs, followed by—

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: It's a total of 90 minutes—

Mr. Scott Reid: It's a total of 90 minutes, sorry.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: —not 90 minutes each, unless you really want a really long meeting.

Mr. Scott Reid: No, none of us wants that.

And at that meeting....

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: At that meeting we'll decide on the date to commence clause-by-clause.

We are agreeing that we will come up with a date at that meeting, and there won't be any more not deciding. Does that sound decisive?

Mr. Scott Reid: When does Minister Gould appear before the committee?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: As before, the minister will appear from 3:30 to 4:30 on the Thursday.

Mr. Scott Reid: All right.

The Chair: Is there any more discussion on the motion?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Yes. I just have one point of clarification.

I'd like to ensure that this will be the end of our witnesses. There will be no further sudden asks for another witness. These CEOs will finish our witness list on the study.

The Chair: Is there any further discussion on the motion?

Mr. Scott Reid: Just give us a second to figure this out.

It's the end of the witnesses—

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: We're asking for your gentleman's agreement on that. The motion does not include it.

An hon. member: A gentleperson's agreement.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Thank you. Yes, it's a gentleperson's agreement, or a diplomat's agreement.

The Chair: Do you need further discussion on the motion?

Mr. Scott Reid: Sorry, give us time. Nobody talk while I'm—

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Scott Reid: I won't be part of the decision-making, but you'll all agree that I am by far the most entertaining person on this side.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Chair, we'll have to discuss this. I can't agree to it.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Are you prepared to continue past 1 o'clock to get it finished?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I don't know if that will be necessary. I don't think it will take that long to discuss.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I appreciate that.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I think we can quickly discuss that and come to an agreement, or not, amongst ourselves. I'll report back in —

● (1250)

Mr. Scott Reid: I have a one o'clock meeting myself, so I would like to....

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Okay.

A voice: You should be voting on the motion—

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Yes, let's vote on the motion, not the gentleman's agreement part.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Where's the list right now?

The Chair: It's long.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Who's next?

The Chair: Mr. Bittle is next.

Scott, I don't think I'd worry about preparing your speech.

Is there any further discussion on the motion?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Yes. We don't foresee the need for further witnesses, at this point.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I'm glad to hear that. That's all I was asking.

The Chair: Can we vote?

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Well, that was easy.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Is there any further business?

A motion to adjourn has been presented.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: http://www.ourcommons.ca

Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : http://www.noscommunes.ca